

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 TUNIS 04105 081402Z

ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-02 ICA-20 SP-02 HA-05 IO-14 /065 W

-----114483 091014Z /21

R 081128Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1393

UNCLAS TUNIS 4105

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SHUM, PINS, TS

SUBJ: AMNESTY FREES 422 PRISONERS

1. PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA SIGNED TWO AMNESTY DECREES ON THE OCCASION OF TUNISIA'S VICTORY DAY. JUNE 1, 1955 MARKED THE OCCASION OF BOURGUIBA'S TRIUMPHAL RETURN TO TUNISIA FROM EXILE.

2. THE FIRST DECREE RESTORED THE CIVIL RIGHTS OF DR. MOHAMED HASSEN BEN AHMED BEN SAL'AH, AHMED BEN SALA'S BROTHER WHO ENGINEERED HIS ESCAPE FROM BIZERTE PRISON IN FEBRUARY 1973.

3. THE SECOND CLEMENCY DECREE NAMED 422 PRISONERS WHO WERE GRANTED PARDONS OR COMMUTATIONS OF THEIR SENTENCES TO TIME ALREADY SERVED. WE UNDERSTAND THAT 191 OF THESE PRISONERS WERE LOWER-LEVEL CADRE OF THE UGTT WHO HAD BEEN ARRESTED IN THE WAKE OF THE JANUARY 26 EVENTS. THE DECREE RELEASED NO MIDDLE-OR HIGHER-LEVEL UGTT OFFICIALS. WE HEARD EARLIER THAT ONLY THOSE PRISONERS ALREADY TRIED AND CONVICTED WOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR CLEMENCY. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE REMAINING RELEASED PRISONERS INCLUDED NUMEROUS STUDENTS CAUGHT IN A WAVE OF 1976 ARRESTS, VARIOUS OTHER MINOR POLITICAL PRISONERS, AND A HODGE-PODGE OF PETTY OFFENDERS.
MULCAHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AMNESTY, PRISONERS RELEASE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TUNIS04105
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780241-0392
Format: TEL
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780679/aaaacqfn.tel
Line Count: 47
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 68fac58c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 1
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2426880
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMNESTY FREES 422 PRISONERS
TAGS: ELAB, SHUM, PINS, TS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/68fac58c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014